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## **Vermont Nominates Four High School Seniors to the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program**

**MONTPELIER** - Secretary of Education Armando Vilaseca announced today at a press conference Vermont's selection of four high school seniors to the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

"This year the Chief State School Officers were invited to nominate students to the program," said Secretary Vilaseca. "Our schools took this opportunity to shine the light on some talented young Vermonters and I am proud to submit four names to the program."

Vermont nominated Rachel Kiefaber, Rutland High School; Rebecca Rouleau, Spaulding High School; Michael Hoffert, U-32; and Jared Birchmore, Vergennes Union High School to the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

"I feel humbled by the nomination," said Kiefaber. "Because I realize there is a myriad of driven students throughout Vermont, who always put in the extra effort in academics and extracurricular activities."

Rouleau said "I am truly appreciative of this honor because it means that I have been acknowledged for doing my best and that is a wonderful feeling."

Application to the Program is by invitation only. The year of their graduation from high school, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program invites students to apply based on their scores on their SAT or ACT exam, and/or their nomination by a Chief State School Officer. Students who qualify will automatically receive applications in January of 2014.

"My first thought when I heard I was selected as a nominee was how grateful I am to have been given the opportunities that led up to this nomination," said Hoffert. "Participating as a member of the robotics team and endurance sports are two that stand out."

Birchmore said, "The nomination to this program has shown me I can achieve great things and continue to challenge myself in future endeavors."

2014 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. The program was established in 1964, by executive order of President Lyndon Johnson, to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors.

For more information about the Program, go to: <http://1.usa.gov/1beUIXq>.